

Legislative Consumer Committee and Consumer Counsel

Constitutional and Statutory Citation:

Article XIII, section 2, Montana Constitution; Title 5, chapter 15, MCA

The Consumer Counsel represents Montana public utility and transportation consumers before the Public Service Commission, state and federal courts, and administrative agencies in matters concerning public utility regulation. The Consumer Counsel, a position required by the Montana Constitution, is appointed by the Legislative Consumer Committee.

The Committee is required to meet at least quarterly, and generally convenes eight to 10 times per year. Meetings involve approval of Consumer Counsel staff activities, review and status updates of current cases, and review of contracts with expert witnesses. Two senators and two representatives, appointed by the Committee on Committees and the Speaker of the House, respectively, serve on the Committee.

Restructuring of the electric and natural gas utility industries is an issue of particular interest to the Committee, especially as rates are affected, and members will be monitoring the progress of the deregulation.

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